

Dear Mr. Beaulieu:

Thank you for your presentation before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting held in Morgan City, Louisiana, on August 22, 2003.

The Commission appreciates your support for the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) and other large-scale restoration projects. The New Orleans District continues to work closely with the State of Louisiana to develop comprehensive solutions to restore and protect the natural and human environment and to create a sustainable ecosystem for coastal Louisiana. The purpose of the Louisiana Coastal Area Comprehensive Coastwide Ecosystem Restoration study is to identify and explore long-range, large-scale ecosystem restoration plans to restore and protect coastal Louisiana. The LCA study is scheduled for completion in June 2004, which would make it eligible for inclusion in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA 2004).

As part of the LCA Comprehensive Study, we are exploring various types of restoration measures across the coast. Two restoration measures to restore the reef in the Wax Lake Outlet area have been identified and analyzed.

(1) Rebuild historic barrier between Point Au Fer and Eugene Island. Enhance Atchafalaya River influence in eastern Atchafalaya Bay, Point Au Fer Island, and Four League Bay by rebuilding the historic barrier between Point Au Fer and Eugene Island. This 22,700-foot barrier would separate Atchafalaya Bay from the gulf and would follow the historic Point Au Fer reef alignment. The barrier could be a reef, barrier island, intertidal spit, or a segmented breakwater. The barrier would increase delta development by reducing the effects of gulf

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waves and the erosive effects of strong frontal passages. It would benefit Point au Fer Island wetlands and Fourleague Bay wetlands by increasing Atchafalaya River influence, while reducing gulf influence.

(2) Rebuild Historic Reefs - Construct segmented reef/breakwater/jetty along the historic Point Au Fer barrier reef from Eugene Island extending towards Marsh Island to the west. Enhance Atchafalaya Delta growth and Atchafalaya River

influence in Sub Province 3 by constructing a segmented reef/breakwater/jetty along the historic Point Au Fer barrier reef from Eugene Island, extending towards Marsh Island to the west. The 107,700-foot barrier would join the Bayou Sale natural levee feature. This measure would reduce delta wetland erosion caused by gulf wave action and would increase containment of Atchafalaya sediments in Atchafalaya Bay.

Prior to implementation of these restoration measures, detailed engineering and environmental studies will be conducted in order to identify the environmental and economic benefits affecting the bays and estuaries.

The New Orleans District is currently preparing a draft report presenting a final array of coastwide plans. Your organization and the general public will have opportunities to review the proposed plans and provide input once the report is available for public review. New Orleans District personnel will keep you informed about the various coastwide plans and progress through public meetings and the following web sites: www.coast2050.gov and www.mvn.usace.army.mil/prj/lca.

The Commission appreciates receiving your comments and looks forward to hearing from you at our future public meetings.

Sincerely,

Don T. Riley
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
President Designee, Mississippi
River Commission